

HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD!

The Cup That He Drank

John 18:1–11



LET'S BEGIN HERE

It has been said that the secret to a happy life is learning how to avoid pain. We certainly live in a day in which this philosophy holds sway. Ours is a comfort-at-any-cost, I-want-it-now society; a society that trumpets, “It’s all about me!” Yet, what the world shuns as foolishness, the Lord embraces as wisdom—the wisdom of pain to turn mere followers of Christ into disciples of Christ. Jesus called it “the cup.” To Him the cup was the anguish, humiliation, and torturous death on the cross. To us it means “taking up our cross” and following Him daily.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. On Being a Christian . . . On Becoming a Disciple (Luke 9:23)

A Christian is a person who is rightly related to God through faith in Jesus Christ. A disciple is a believer whose commitment to Christ has grown into a deep desire to obey, regardless of the consequences, sacrifice, or cost.

2. Jesus Christ Our Lord: The Ideal Example (John 18:1–11)

The garden where Jesus prayed and where torch-bearing officials came to arrest Him produced a threatening setting (John 18:1–3). But Jesus didn’t resist, which was a surprising surrender (18:4–10). Before He was taken into custody, Jesus asked a searching question (18:11).



A CLOSER LOOK

When Mortal Flesh Meets Majesty

John opened his gospel proclaiming the deity of Jesus (John 1:1–5) and then told us about His humanity (1:14). It shouldn’t be surprising, then, that toward the end of his gospel, John gave us a glimpse of deity clothed in human flesh when Roman and Jewish officials came into the garden that night.

Continued on next page



Quotable

*A disciple of
Christ has a
growing drive to
obey regardless of
the consequences,
sacrifice, or cost.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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John recorded that when Jesus said “I am” to those who came to arrest Him, “they drew back and fell to the ground” (18:6). Some commentators interpret the unexpected collapsing of these battle-hardened soldiers, falling like dominoes, one on top of another, as a surprised reaction to Jesus’ sudden approach—as if the soldiers in the front backed into those standing behind, causing them to stumble and fall.¹ A more likely interpretation is that when mortal flesh met Jesus’ majesty, the soldiers’ reaction was in keeping with others who have encountered deity (Ezekiel 1:28; Luke 5:8–9; Acts 9:3–4; Revelation 1:17). And though Jesus’ “I am” sometimes refers simply to an acknowledgment of His identification (John 9:9), in light of the soldiers’ response, Jesus’ words were probably a revelation of His deity (Exodus 3:14; John 8:58).



LET’S LIVE IT

To those who wish to deny themselves and drink whatever cup God has for them, here are four realities we must never forget.

- For every disciple, there is a purpose to fulfill.
- With every purpose, there is a cup to drink.
- In every cup, there is a pain to accept and endure.
- Through every pain, there’s victory to claim.



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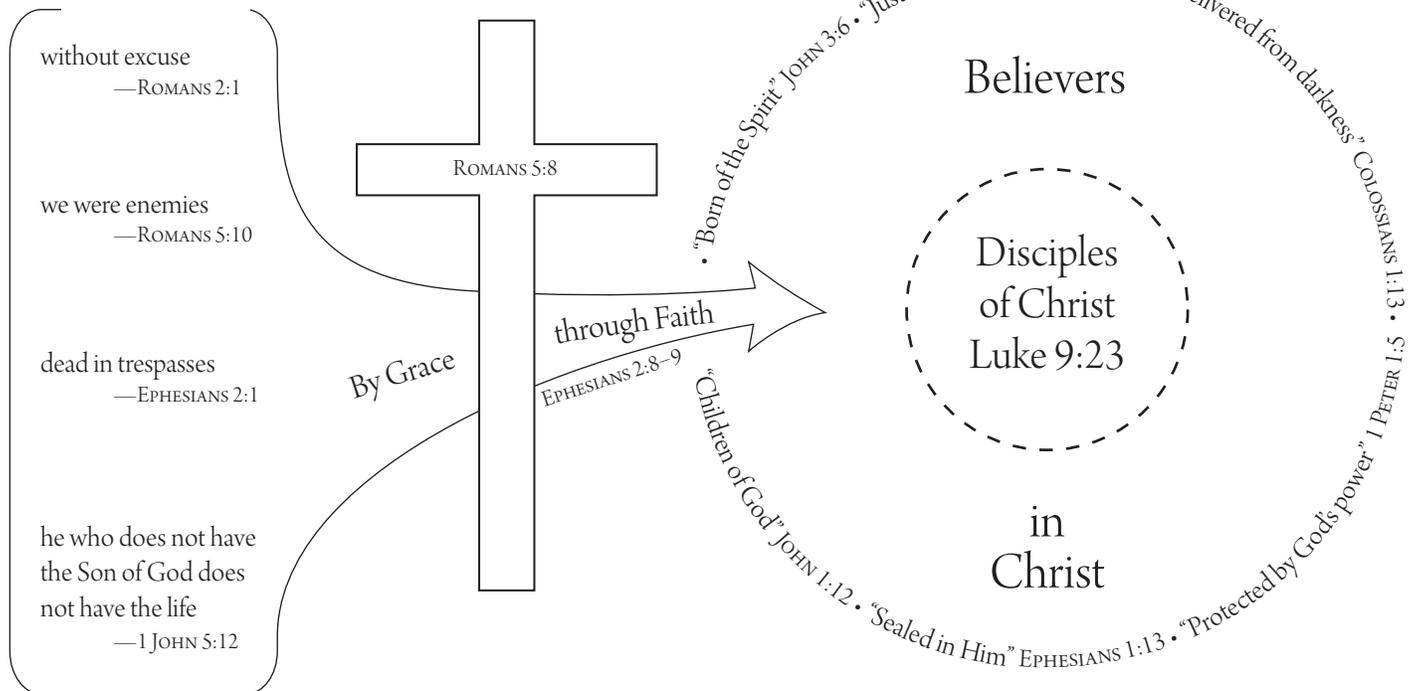
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A Distinction: Believers and Disciples



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ENDNOTE

1. See Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 743–44. Morris doesn't take this position but offers it as a possibility.



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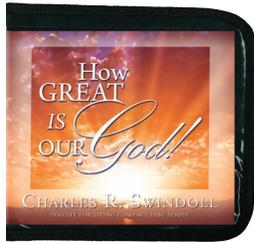
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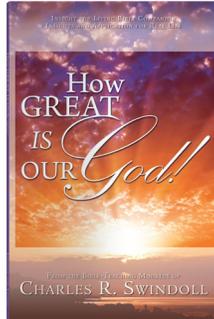
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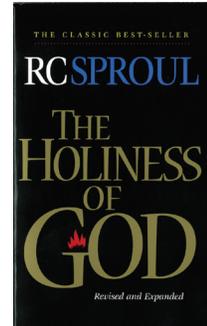
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